HARAMBEE

FLAME!

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

EDITORIAL

Who is your enemy? Your enemy is a person or group who has interests that are fundamentally opposed to yours or who sees his, her, or its interests as being opposed to yours. Your enemy may hate you or may not but, because he, she, or it believes--correctly or incorrectly--that your success at dealing with your interests will get in the way of his, her, or its success, your enemy will do everything possible to see to your failure. If your destruction becomes necessary in the mind of your enemy, that enemy will attempt to destroy you.

In the world of animals(not including humans), there are natural enemies and what we might think of as non-natural enemies. The hawk, so far as we know, doesn't hate the ground squirrel. But it kills the critter anyway. The hawk lives by eating the flesh of animals. The ground squirrel can't kick the hawk's butt, so it's an item on the hawk's menu. That's nature; and that's a matter of the hawk being the natural enemy of the ground squirrel. And because of the strength and size of the hawk, the ground squirrel can only avoid being the hawk's meal by getting out of sight when that predator bird is on the scene.

On the African savannah, the lion stalks prey. But it is not the only powerful flesh-eater on the prowl. It is in competition with the leopard, the wild dog, the hyena, and other beasts. Among them all, the lion is top "dog." It holds this position because it's the biggest and, owing to its size and strength, the toughest. And as much as the lion is a hunter, it is also a thief, bogarding other beasts out of their kills, and/or chasing competitors out of or away from its territory.

Among the lion's competitors is one in particular that the lion must sometimes back away from--the hyena. Heads up, one-on-one, the hyena's got nothing coming against the lion. But let a hyena have one or more of its partners around and the "king of beasts" can find itself without a crown, getting its ass kicked and being laughed at on top of that. In short, the hyena "understands" that there's strength in numbers, it's well-equipped to defend itself, and it's got an attitude that's not conducive to the idea of taking a whip-

ping willingly or running away from a fight.

It comes down to this: because the lion and the hyena compete for the same resources(territory and prey animals) and because both of them are bad, they are natural enemies. And because the ground squirrel is intended by the hawk as its meal, the hawk is the ground squirrel's natural enemy. And both the ground squirrel and the hyena, when confronted by their natural enemies, cooperate with others of their own kind to deal with the enemies. The ground squirrels signal to each other, "Yo, partners. Let's get to the burrows." The hyenas, on the other hand, band together to stomp suckers into the dirt.

But about this "non-natural enemy" thing. One of the laws of nature is that of survival of the fittest. Operating according to this law, members of the same species--particularly, males--do fight each other, mainly to decide which ones are going to be able to mate and send their genetic traits into the future. When food gets scarce, members of the same species will fight each other and may even eat the young. Generally, throughout the animal kingdom, the battles between males for mating rights are not fights to the death but ritual affairs in which one animal exhibits its superior strength. Among those animals for which dominance battles do commonly result in serious injury or death, or in cases where animals of the same species battle seriously over scarce food, the combatants can be said to be "non-natural enemies." They temporarily have opposing interests. And inasmuch as they get locked into life-and-death struggle with each other, they act like enemies.

But be sure of this. Whatever battles occur within a species, the members of that species operate in a fashion designed to perpetuate their kind and to ensure maximum group well-being. No matter how strong the rivalry between two competing ground squirrels, for example, neither of them is going to stand up and signal a hawk in an effort to set up its rival for a hawk attack. It's rival may be a "non-natural enemy," but that ground squirrel knows that its real enemy is the hawk.

We Africans in the United States of (occupied)America are

not ground squirrels. And while some of us spend a lot of time laughing, neither are we hyenas. We are part of the single human species, a species which has been divided up into separate categories, or "races," by certain Caucasian men of "science" whose "expertise" has been enlisted by those who have promoted the doctrine of "white"(Caucasian) supremacy.

As part of the human species, we should have no natural enemies within the human race. But the history of at least the past four to five hundred years has made it evident to us that, in power-holding Caucasians, we have what is, in effect, a natural enemy. This enemy sees his interests as being fundamentally opposed to ours and has shown a willingness to cripple or destroy us and others(especially other people of color) whom he has viewed as getting in the way of his agenda--the agenda of "white" power. Moreover, this enemy has shown no respect for the natural world at all. And confronted with a choice between his financial profits and the health and safety of his own people, he will choose the cash.

Like the lion, this enemy is a hunter and a thief. Unlike the lion, this enemy has the ability to plan treachery, his own, and to use members of what he views as his prey(or potential prey) species to commit treachery on other members of those species. Unlike the lion, this enemy has created and maintained institutions by which those whom he licks his chops after are taught to think and act in his interests.

It is in the interests of this country's power-wielders for African communities here to be fragmented, weak, in conflict, etc.; for our people to steal from each other, to maim and kill each other, to not be able to tell day from night. The weaker the prey, the easier it is for the predator to keep its belly full. Yet as clear as this natural law is, there are those among us who are contributing to our weakness and either don't see that they are acting on behalf of the predator or think so much like him that they don't see themselves to be, in any real way, a part of us and, thus, don't give a damn that their actions put us in jeopardy.

When we think about what crack does to a brother or sister--

turning him or her into a lunatic, moving him or her to do any foul thing to anyone in order to score the cash to cop the next rock, eroding whatever self-respect and sense of dignity the person might have; there can be no doubt that the crack-dealer is acting as an agent for the predator. We understand that many and probably most of the young Africans who are involved in this trade don't see themselves as or intend to be the predator's agents. But, like those many politicians of ours who sell us out, the police informants who turn us over to the predator, the businessmen of ours who often care everything about their bottom lines and nothing about us, the African entertainers who be steppin' and fetchin', Africans who sell crack and other dangerous drugs to us are acting on behalf of our enemy. They are turn-coat ground squirrels, filling in their partners' burrows so they can't escape the hawk; traitorous hyenas, leading their den-mates to chew on rocks so they will lack teeth with which to defend themselves against marauding lions.

Of course, it is the predator who teaches us to put what we feel are our individual interests ahead of the interests of our people, who teaches us to care more for cash and trinkets than about our people. It is the predator's institutions that lead us on self destructive paths and his economic system that reduces us to preying on each other for buzzard bait. But is is our actions that contribute directly to the turning of a potential Omowale (Malcolm X) into a whacked-out crack-head, a potential Queen Nzinga into a strawberry. It is our actions that send our own sisters and brothers to the grave.

There's something strange here in lion country. Some of us curse the predator, talk like angry men, but act like the predator's girlfriend.

Editor

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.), is a pan-Africanist newsletter. The FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any distinctions between African people based solely on place of birth. References in the FLAME to Africans are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter "black" or other terms designating African people. This is our practice because we do not wish to diminish the integrity and authenticity of the articles we excerpt from. Also, unless necessary for clarification, we generally don't correct typing or other errors contained in articles we reprint. Please bring any errors you may find in the FLAME to our attention.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(p.k.a. David Rice).

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 1200 words, though longer pieces will not automatically be rejected. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. Submitted poems should not sacrifice power and beauty for sake of uniform rhythm and/or rhyme. Send submissions to the editor: HARAMBEE FLAME/H.A.C.O.
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE 68542-2500

FROM OTHER SOURCES

The Case Of Gary Graham: Circumstances & Support

"Despite numerous witnesses who support his claim of innocence, Gary Graham sits on death row in Huntsville, Texas facing execution on August 17. At the age of 17, Graham was charged with the shooting death of Bobby Lambert in a supermarket parking lot, convicted solely on the testimony of a witness who observed the gunman for 'a split second' from about forty feet away. Not one of the five other eyewitnesses identified Graham, and one says she has since seen Lambert's killer on the streets several times. Graham's court-appointed lawyer was an acquaintance of the sole prosecution witness and refused to investigate Graham's alibi defense. Four witnesses who were never called to the stand have come forward with affidavits saying that Graham was with them at the time of the shooting. Each of them has passed a lie detector test...

"Harry Belafonte, Danny Glover, Coretta Scott King, country western singer Kenny Rogers, Amnesty International and all Roman Catholic bishops in Texas are just a few of those who have spoken out in opposition to the death sentence against Gary Graham. Loretta Lambert, the widow of the man Graham was convicted of killing, wrote a letter to state officials saying, 'I do not want the execution of a possibly innocent man on my conscience'..."

-from "Stop The Execution Of Gary Graham," page 2, July 30 WORKERS VANGUARD(N.Y., N.Y.)

Business Tricks And Tribulations Face Africans In U.S. Economic Game

"Kente cloth and collard greens, a dark and lovely mother and daughter on product packages, and Black nationalist colors red, Black, and green on pro-

duct boxes mean huge profits for white companies selling products to Blacks.

"But a recent survey found Black consumers prefer to do business with Black firms and spend millions on products they believe are Black-made...

"Black businessmen say they control about eight percent of the $3 billion Black health and beauty aid market...

"Charles Johnson, president of Ashaway, Inc., a Dallas-based lotion and creme maker,...said 15 major 'ethnic distributors' deliver Black-oriented products made by whites to retailers, but won't take products made by Blacks.

"Black-made products are either ignored or priced 40-60 percent higher than necessary so distributors can make profits, Black businessmen complained...

"Black manufacturers want their products to go directly from their plants to store shelves with a single price mark-up...

"Fred Rasheed, who negotiates agreements with white corporations for the NAACP's Fair Share program, said the nation's oldest civil rights group supports the idea. Going directly to retail stores keeps money in the Black community and creates jobs, Mr. Rasheed said.

"'You're not going to get *Ebony* or *Essence* to write stories on this...' grumbled one businessman. They depend on major white hair care companies for advertising, he said...

"According to PUSH summit(PUSH Economic Summit, July 21-24) presenters, Blacks account for close to 30percent of retail sales and spend $360 billion annually. Yet Blacks own only 8,000 manufacturing firms, versus over 300,000 white male manufacturers, said a 1992 Census Bureau report. Nearly half

of Black firms employ all Black employees and over half had a majority of Black workers, the report said."

-from "Kente Cloth And Red, Black, And Green Mean Big Bucks For White Businesses," pages 8 and 35, Aug. 11 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL)

Very Spacey "Racial" Considerations Revealed

..."Future plans drawn up at the United Nations have set out a blueprint for colonizing outer space with a racially-segregated solar system, the *Weekly Journal* has learned.

"Highly classified documents, leaked from a special committee report, show that governments intend the system to be put to work 'within the next 200 years'.

"They reveal the conclusions of a special committee advising the U.N. on 'Race Relations In Space'. The document states:

'The committee finds that the historical racial enmities which have been a major source of human conflict make it imperative that the future development of humankind be allowed to take place in a racially neutral environment.

'In short, it is considered that the colonization of the solar system, envisaged to take place over the next two centuries should ensure that the races remain separate and at a distance.

'The committee further considers that the attainment of this goal is best served by the allocation of planets upon the basis of ethnic distinction'...

"The astonishing papers...were passed to the *Weekly Journal* by an ex-astronaut, April Odie..."

-from "Colonizing In Space," page 6 May/June THE BURNING SPEAR(Oakland, CA.)

African Women In New York Confront Disrespect

'The sisters of the December 12th Movement, the Fannie Lou Hamer Collective and Masses United for Human Rights recently confronted T-shirt vendors on the streets of Harlem. With a call to all Black women to exercise self-determination and demand respect, the group marched up and down 125th Street, insisting that street vendors remove from their tables T-shirts with slogans offensive to Black people in general, and Black women in particular...

'The most offensive T-shirt was displayed for the community to see, and the group stood over those vendors stocking it with chants of 'Black Women, Demand Respect', until they acquiesced and removed the offensive shirt from the table...

'Most vendors readily complied and all progressed smoothly, until one misguided young brother attempted to flex his muscles on the sister leading the group. With military precision, the December 12th Brotherhood(real Black men), intervened in defense of the sisters, and a physical confrontation ensued. The Brotherhood swiftly demonstrated to the aggressors that they too demanded respect for sisters..."

-from "Black Women Demand Respect," page 8, July ARM THE MASSES(N.Y., N.Y.)

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Libya Facing Possible New U.N. Sanctions

"Despite Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi's efforts to resolve an international crisis by offering two Libyan nationals accused in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 for trial in a neutral third country, the U.S. has begun consulting with the international community on toughening United Nations sanctions on Libya.

"Secretary of State Warren Christopher said July 9 that the Clinton administration was seeking to initiate new penalties on Libya by the time existing sanctions expire on August 15. The new penalties would include an embargo on oil production equipment and a freeze on certain assests.

"The present U.N. Security Council imposed embargo, which includes a ban on international air flights and arms sales to Libya, has created an economic and health crisis in the north African country.

"According to reports, Libyans, including children, are dying from treatable diseases because the embargo has hampered access to medical supplies. Also, Libyans have to travel out of the country for certain hospital treatment...

"On June 24, the Honorable Louis Farrakhan told a gathering of Black newspaper publishers in Los Angeles that Mr. Gadhafi had expressed to him a willingness to funnel billions of dollars into the inner cities of America for development if Black Americans would help lift the embargo against his country.

"Several days later, on Rev. Jesse Jackson's CNN talk show, Mr. Gadhadfi offered to turn the suspects over to the custody of Rev. Jackson if an arrangement for a trial in a third country could be arranged..."

-from "U.N. Sanctions Threaten Libyan People," page 12, July 28 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL)

LETTERS

The Omaha Police Division wants the support of our community in raising $100,000 toward erecting a memorial for Omaha police officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. The question I pose is: What about the hundreds of African American citizens who have lost their lives innocently at the hands of overzealous and racist police officers?

The police abuse our people. They shoot our people without fear of reprimand, as in the case of Scott Baldwin. They set up our people for convictions and jail time, as in convictions of former Panthers. They murder our people while they're in police custody--Richard Kellen, Kevin Watson, et al. They sweep crimes committed against our people under the rug and then Omaha Mayor P.J. Morgan asks that we "move on" and forget the past.

Despite all this, the police are asking for our support. They want us to work with them only when it benefits THEIR needs or causes. They tell us that, by contributing to the construction of the memorial to THEIR dead, we will be enabled to understand and respect the work that the police do.

How is it that we are to understand and/or respect the work of the police when we are treated with disrespect in our own homes and community and when Blacks on the force aren't even respected?

We cannot allow ourselves to be used or led astray. A memorial needs to be erected to the memory of our own Sisters and Brothers who have been victims of the police and fallen at the hands of abusive and unjust police power.

Marvin O. McClarty, Jr.

(Marvin lives and works in Omaha. He is a husband and father and the son of a retired, long-time member of the Omaha Police Dept.)

POETRY/STORY/GRAPHICS

TIRED

I live each day by different rules

I get so tired

I have no conversations longer than 3 minutes

I get so tired

I am too cowardly to commit suicide

I get so tired

I am driven by rage toward homicide

I get so tired

I cannot take care of myself,

let alone, a family

I get so tired

I have no skills or future

I get so tired

I am a long-time prisoner and

I am so tired.

David W. Landers

(State Prison; Lincoln, Nebraska)

DANCE?

They move with complete abandon
while we dance with measured steps
not wanting to be conspicuous
they can remove their clothing
ignore the obvious beat
and dance alone
to wild rhythms unheard by us
while we dance
the
measured
steps
synchronized with partners
doing our damnedest
not to miss the rhythm
of the drum
so close to our heart beat
a distraction we learned
when as slaves
we had to walk
the
measured
steps in chains.

When a man chooses a woman, it reflects all kinds of shit. How he felt about his momma, his daddy, how much tv he watched, how much he read, the influence of others, his concern about what others say about him, his ego, his bravado... Even those who don't have a white woman wish they had one. You see them drooling over the ones on tv, with their black women sitting right there beside them...The media put half-naked white women out there and our men and women and children eat it up like the big mac, chicken mcnuggets and all the other illusions they give us...As long as iwoman see the brothas seemingly uncontrollably drawn to the lightest woman in any gathering simply because she is as close to white as they can get without actually going there, but really wanting to go there anyway...and on the other hand, hear those who have married them or chosen them as mates constantly demean them by calling them "yellow bitches," "yellow dogs," and "half-white whores,"... and until iwoman hear someone come up with some programs to heal ourselves of the disease which keeps us crippled with anxiety, fear, and self-loathing because of our dark skin and nappy hair and our fairer brothers and sisters trippin' because of their light skin and straight hair, she can only continue to study, observe the situation and take notes in hopes that some answers or solutions will manifest themselves sometime soon.

The above, as well as the poem on the previous page, is by Staajabu, who is a mama and poet living in Sacramento. The illustration is from the cover of FROM AFRIKAN CAPTIVES TO INSANE SLAVES by Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan.

Back In Time

And about this time I had a vision, and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened, the thunder rolled in the heavens, and blood flowed in streams; and I heard a voice saying, "Such is your luck, such you are called on to see, and let it come, rough or smooth, you must surely bear it." I now withdrew myself as much as my situation would permit, from the intercourse of my fellow-servants, for the avowed purpose of serving the Spirit more fully; and it appeared to me, and reminded me of the things it had already shown me, and that it would then reveal to me the knowledge of the elements, the revolution of the planets, the operation of tides, and changes of the seasons. After this revelation, in the year of 1825, and the knowledge of the elements being made known to me, I sought more than ever to obtain true holiness, before the great day of judgement should appear, and then I began to receive the true knowledge of faith. And from the first steps of righteousness until the last was I made perfect; and the Holy Ghost was with me and said, "Behold me as I stand in the heavens!" and I looked and saw the forms of men in different attitudes, and there were lights in the sky to which the children of darkness gave other names than what they really were: for they were the lights of the Savior's hands, stretched forth from east to west, even as they were extended on the cross on Calvary, for the redemption of sinners. And I wondered greatly at these miracles, and prayed to be informed of a certainty of the meaning thereof; and shortly afterwards, while laboring in the field, I discovered drops of blood on the corn, as though it were dew from heaven; and I communicated it to many, both white and black, in the neighborhood; and I then found on the leaves in the woods hieroglyphic characters, and numbers, with the forms of men in different attitudes, portrayed in blood, and representing the figures I had seen before in the heavens. And now the Holy Ghost had revealed itself to me, and made plain the miracles it had shown me--for as

the blood of Christ had been shed on this earth, and had ascended to heaven for the salvation of sinners, and was now returning to earth again in the form of dew, and as the leaves on the trees bore the impression of the figures I had seen in the heavens, it was plain to me that the Savior was about to lay down the yoke he had born for the sins of men, and the great day of judgement was at hand...And the Spirit appeared to me again and said, as the Savior had been baptised, so should we be also; and when the white people would not let us be baptised by the church, we went down into the water together, in the sight of many who reviled us, and were baptised by the Spirit. After this I rejoiced greatly, and gave thanks to God. And on the 12th of May, 1828, I heard a loud noise in the heavens, and the Spirit instantly appeared to me and said, the Serpent was loosened, and Christ had lain down the yoke he had born for the sins of men, and that I should take it on and fight against the serpent, for the time was fast approaching when the first should be last, and the last should be first...

Was not Christ crucified?--And by signs in the heavens would it make known to me when I should commence the great work, and until the first sign appeared I should conceal it from the knowledge of men. And on the appearance of the sign(the eclipse of the sun last February), I should arise and prepare myself, and slay my enemies with their own weapons. And immediately on the sign appearing in the heavens, the seal was removed from my lips, and I communicated the great work laid out for me to do, to four in whom I had the greatest confidence--Henry, Hark, Nelson and Sam. It was intended by us to have begun the work of death on the 4th of July last...

Source: THE CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER

Ayer Company Publishers, Inc.

Our thanks to the Nat Turner Book Foundation for its donation to us of THE CONFESSIONS.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The BLACK AUTHORS AND PUBLISHED WRITERS DIRECTORY is now publishing a monthly update. The newsletter "Black Literary Players," runs such features as: author signings; names and addresses of critics and reviewers; book and music publishers; film, song, and play producers; radio and television talk show listings; books of interest; etc. For more information, write to: Black Literary Players; P.O. Box 47; Rochester Hills, MI; 48308. Or call (313)650-9450.

Kahil El 'Zabar: Music Man Makes Poetry. Kahil El 'Zabar, internationally renowned avant garde jazz percussionist and founder of the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble, has a collection of poetry, MIS TAKEN BRILLIANCE, which is scheduled to be published this month by Third World. The title poem, "Mis Taken Brilliance," can be heard on the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble's "Dance With The Ancestors" on Chameleon cassettes and compact discs. Contact Carolyn Dennis at (312) 651-0700. Dennis is Publicity Director at Third World Press.

Dr. Waliyy(Walter) Gill, who spent several years in Omaha working in the areas of education and theatre, will serve as project director for a CEAAM (Center for Educating African American Males) agriculture-science project for inner-city middle-school African American males. The project is designed to assist the boys in achieving good grades in science, expose them to good health and public safety practices, and expose them to careers in science and agriculture. The project will be conducted at Harlem Park Middle and Calverton Middle schools in Baltimore, Maryland, as well as at other locations. Contact Dr. Gill at (410) 235-0600.

The African American Museums Association(AAMA) will hold its 1993 annual conference on August 26-28 at the Marriott Hotel in Roanoke, Virginia. The theme is "How Are We Doing? African Americans and Historic Preservation." For conference registration or membership information, call (513) 376-4611.